

# THE COMET.

VOL. I.

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## Mark Twain as Jenkins.

Something over twenty years ago Mark Twain wrote a series of letters from San Francisco to the Virginia City Enterprise. The subjoined effort was his first contribution, and the others were in the same free-and-easy strain. It is not necessary to say that they drew wide notice. Reference is made several times in this first letter to "the Unreliable." He was the reporter of the well-known but long-since departed Virginia City Union, of which Hon. Tom Fitch, the orator, was the editor. This reporter and Mark (then doing local work for the Enterprise) were sent to Carson to report the legislature. Mark made wild work of it. He was too lazy to pay any attention to the routine proceedings, got everything wrong and his reports were so unintentionally funny that everybody roared over them. Joe Goodman, editor of the Enterprise, sent another reporter to Carson, but ordered Twain to stay there, too, and continue his diverting record of legislative progress. Now the Union's scribe was as careful and accurate as Mark was heedless and truth-defying. His reports were models of correctness, and were used by the legislature every day for reference instead of the official minutes. Twain had the audacity, in the face of his own wretched performances, to christen this pink of reporters the Unreliable. The ironical humor of the title pleased the Washoe fancy, and the nick-name stuck. It stuck so fast, indeed, that the poor fellow, who prided himself upon his accuracy more than upon anything else in life, was called nothing else by anybody. It became unbearable to him, especially as Twain kept continually rebuking him in print for his assumed careless statements. The Unreliable finally left Nevada to get rid of his name, and has been lost to history.

SAN FRANCISCO, June 19, 63.

EDITOR ENTERPRISE: I have just received, per Wells, Fargo, the following sweet-scented little note, written in a microscopic hand, in the center of a delicate sheet of paper—like a wedding invitation or a funeral notice—and I feel it my duty to answer it:

MR. MARK TWAIN: Do tell us something about the fashions. Do, now, tell us all you know about it, won't you? Pray, excuse brevity, for I am in such a hurry.

P. S. Please burn this as soon as you have read it.

"Do tell us"—and she is in "such a hurry." Well, I never knew a girl in my life who could write three consecutive sentences without italicizing a word. They can't do it, you know. Now, if I had a wife and she—however, I don't think I shall have one this week, and it is hardly worth while to borrow trouble.

Bettie, my love, you do me proud. In thus requesting me to fix up the fashions for you, in an intelligent manner, you pay a compliment to my critical and observant eye, and my varied and extensive information, which a mind less perfectly balanced than mine could scarcely contemplate without excess of vanity. Will I tell you about the fashions? I will, Bettie—you better bet you bet, Bettie, my darling. I learned these expressions from the Unreliable; like all phrases which fall from his lips, they are frightfully vulgar; but then they sound rather musical than otherwise.

A happy circumstance has put it in my power to furnish you the fashions from headquarters—as it were, Bettie. I refer you to the assemblage of fashion, elegance and loveliness called together in the parlor of the Lick house last night (a party was given by the proprietors on the occasion of paying up that little balance due on my board bill). I will give you a brief and lucid description of the dresses worn by several of the ladies of my acquaintance who were present. Mrs. B. was arrayed in a superb speckled foulard, with the stripes running fore and aft, and with collars and camails to match; also a reticule of Chantilly lace, embroidered with blue and yellow dots and things, done in cruel and edged with a solferino fringe four inches deep—lovely. Mrs. B. is tall, and graceful and beautiful, and the general effect of her costume was to render her appearance extremely lively.

Miss J. W. wore a charming robe polonoise of scarlet *ruche a la vieille*, with yellow fluted flounces of rich bombazine, fourteen inches wide; low neck and short sleeves; also a Figaro vest of bleached domestic selva edge turned down with a black stick, and trimmed with festoons of blue chioroe taffetas. Gay! I reckon not. Her head-dress was the sweetest thing you ever saw: a bunch of stately ostrich plumes—red and white—springing like fountains above each ear, with a crown between, consisting of a single *fleur de soleil*, fresh from the garden. Ah, me! Miss W. looked enchantingly pretty; however there was nothing unusual about that—I have

seen her look so, even in a milder costume.

Miss C. wore an elegant *chereux de la reine* (with ruffles and furbelows, trimmed with bands of guipure round the bottom), and a mohair Garibaldi shirt; her unique head-dress was crowned with a graceful *panache de terre* (Limerick French), and she had her hair done up in papers—greenback. The effect was very rich—partly owing to the market value of the material, and partly to the general loveliness of the lady herself.

Miss A. H. wore a splendid *Lucia di Lammermoor*, trimmed with green baize; also a cream-colored mantilla-shaped *pardessus*, with a deep gore in the neck, and embellished with a wide greque of taffeta ribbon, and otherwise garnished with ruches and radishes and things. Her *coiffure* was a simple wreath of sardines on a string. She was lovely to a fault.

Now, what do you think of that effort, Bettie (I wish I knew your other name), for an unsanctified newspaper reporter devoid of a milliner's education? Doesn't it strike you that there are more brains and fewer oysters in my head than a casual acquaintance with me would lead you to suppose? Ah, well; what I don't know, Bet, I can tell you. I could have described the dresses of all the ladies in that party, but I was afraid to meddle with those strangers. I might unwittingly get something wrong and give offense.

You see, strangers never exercise any charity in matters of this kind—they always get mad at the least inaccuracies of description concerning their apparel, and make themselves disagreeable. But if you will rig yourself up according to the modes I have furnished, you bet you'll do, you know. You can weather the circus.

You will naturally wish to be informed as to the most fashionable style of male attire, and I may as well give you an idea of my own personal appearance at the party. I wore one of Mr. Lawlor's shirts, and Mr. Ridge-way's vest, and Dr. Wayman's coat, and Mr. Camp's hat, and Mr. Paxton's boots, and Jerry Long's white kids, and Judge Gilchrist's cravat, and the Unreliable's brass seal ring, and Dr. Toll-road's McDonald's pantaloons—and if you have any idea they were any way short in the legs, do you just climb into them once, sweetness. The balance of my outfit I gathered up indiscriminately from various individuals, whose names I have forgotten, and have now no means of ascertaining, as I thoughtlessly erased the marks from the different garments this morning. But I looked salubrious, B, if ever a man did.

Messrs. Editors, I never wrote such a personal article before. I expect I had better go home now. Well, I have been here long enough, anyhow. I didn't come down to stay always, in the first place. I don't know of anything more here that I want to see. I might just as well go home now as now; I have been wanting to go home for a good while. I don't see why I haven't gone before this. They say it is healthier up there than it is here. I believe it. I have not been very well for a week. I don't eat enough, I expect. But I would stay here just as long as I pleased though, if I wanted to. But I don't. Well, I don't care—I am going home. That is the amount of it; and very soon, too—maybe sooner.

MARK TWAIN.

## A Base Fabrication.

"He's got them on! He's got them on!" triumphantly exclaimed young Johnny Jarphy at the breakfast table.

"Got wot on?" asked his mother. "What ails you Johnny? What are you peering under the table for? Why don't you sit up straight and eat your meal?"

"Pah! got 'em on! I see 'em!" emphatically asserted the Jarphy's heir.

"Get wot on? Wot are you talking about?" sternly asked his father.

"Why, you've got your pants on, and I heard Mr. Smiff say that he thought Mah wore 'em,"—Pittsburg Telegraph.

"Mr. B.," said the president of a bank to his cashier; "I understand you have sold your fine trotting horse?"

"Yes, sir," replied Mr. B. uneasily; "I found the luxury rather too expensive."

"And you declined an invitation to attend a champagne party the other evening?"

"Yes, sir."

The cashier was growing white now.

"And I also learn that you have taken a class in Sunday school and have become a member of the church choir?"

"Oh, sir!" exclaimed the frightened man; "the amount is less than \$10,000, and if you will give two days' time I will restore every cent."

But the president was inexorable—



House truly Robt. J. Long

## Hous. R. L. Taylor and S. W. Hawkins.

Democratic and Republican Electors respectively, for the State at large, made speeches at the Court House last Monday. The time being so soon after the Fair, and the people being mostly engaged in harvesting the pea crop the attendance was not large, but enough were present to comfortably fill the building.

Col. Taylor spoke first, and for an hour and a quarter held the rapt attention of his hearers, only interrupted now and then by vociferous cheering and hearty laughter. Col. Taylor discussed the policy of the Republican party since it came into power, and held up in review its many sins of commission, its abuse of public plunder, and its failure to make good its oft repeated promises to an outraged people. Occasionally he relieved the tedium of the dull recital of facts and figures by an anecdote, always aptly applied and well told and that every time brought down the house. No people were ever so won by a stranger as those present by Bob Taylor last Monday, who universally pronounced his effort the best made at Waverly since the canvass opened.

Capt. Hawkins followed in a talk of some length, logical and well spoken. Unquestionably Capt. Hawkins is the peer of any member of his party, if not the brainiest in the State, he is the best talker. Like Col. Taylor, his remarks were confined to a discussion of politics and questions of difference between the Republican and Democratic parties. He nor Col. Taylor indulged in no remarks about the private characters and misdeeds of Messrs. Cleveland and Blaine, deeming matters of public policy of more interest to the country than the peccadilloes of party leaders.

We do no injustice to Capt. Hawkins in saying that Col. Taylor is his superior debater and gets away with him every time, and would with any speaker that seeks to make fair and white the record of the Republican party—it can't be done.

Col. Taylor and Capt. Hawkins are upon the friendliest terms, travel in same conveyance, frequently occupy the same couch and have none other than a political difference. They went Tuesday to Camden where they again spoke to a good crowd.—Humphreys County News.

## Anecdote of Longfellow.

Rev. John B. Kenyon gives in the Syracuse Christian Advocate an account of a visit to Mr. Longfellow in Cambridge in 1881, and among other anecdotes touching the great poet relates the following:

One day a knock was heard at the door, which Mr. Longfellow answered in person. The poet at once recognized his visitor, both by his accent and dress, as a western rustic. As his custom was, Mr. Longfellow invited the man to step in. Once fairly in the house the fellow gazed curiously around, and at last said:

"Is this the house that George Washington once occupied?"

Mr. Longfellow answered:

"It is."

"Well, by the way," said the rustic, "might I ask you the party is that occupies it at present?"

"Certainly," replied the poet; "my name is Longfellow."

"Longfellow, Longfellow," drawled the "sineu of the west." "You don't mean Henry W. Longfellow?"

"That is my name," answered the poet.

"Well, I um," said the rustic, "that beats me. Why, I thought Henry W. Longfellow died before Washington was born."

## THE ELECTORS.

Everybody Delighted With "East Tennessee's Bob."—Hawkins no Match for Him.

Special to the World.

TRENTON, Oct. 11.—Taylor and Hawkins, electors, spoke here to-day. Hawkins opened the debate, and consumed nearly the whole ninety minutes discussing the tariff. It was by far the ablest Republican speech that has been made here during the canvass.

Taylor's reply was overwhelming. It called forth loud and prolonged cheers of enthusiasm, and as approval of the negroes and white Republicans were forced by his eloquence and power to occasionally join in the cheering. I heard a Republican remark after the speaking: "You have the man on us." Everybody was delighted with East Tennessee's Bob. His speech did more to arouse the Democracy than any speech here of the canvass.

## DRESDEN TENN.

Taylor and Hawkins, at the Capital of Weakley-Democracy Strengthened.

Special to the World.

DRESDEN, Oct. 10.—Taylor and Hawkins, electors, spoke here to-day to a respectful audience, Taylor leading. Hawkins presented in a most able manner, his side of the question and pleaded public and Democratic condonation for Blaine. Taylor's efforts were masterly, exceeding the expectations of his most sanguine friends. He aroused an enthusiasm among the Democrats not before elicited in this campaign. Weakley will give an increased Democratic majority.

## Promiscuous Endorsement.

Bill Nye, in New York Mercury.

It seems to me that as a people we are too prone to loan our opinions to Tom, Dick and Harry, in such a manner as to assist said Tom, Dick and Harry in the sale of their wares. Perhaps this is not essentially an American characteristic. I have not been abroad for several years lately, owing to shrinkage of values in New Jerusalem mining stock and second mortgage bonds of the Blue Tail Fly Consolidated, so I may be a little erroneous in hazarding this statement, but are we not a nation of endorsers and encouragers, aiders and abettors of Jas. Crow's nostrums and soaps and ready reliefs and pain paralyzers, and good Samaritan garrotes generally? Opinion puts it pretty strong in its editorial warning to the slimy army of quacks who haven't the courage to go out on the road with a sand bag and carving knife and sob humanity with the rest of the thieves, but none too strong.

People endorse all kinds of stuff in a way that smells so strongly of venality and corruption that the thinking mind turns from the endorsement with intense nausea. I don't know whether that word nausea is spelled correctly or not. I do not know that I ever used it before in one of my scientific articles, but it is being used a great deal this season in "the states," and is giving good satisfaction wherever it has been tried.

Of course you should purchase the opinion of a great statesman favorable to a brand of cigars by simply allowing him to smell the box. Neither could you obtain the endorsement of a toilet soap by simply giving an eminent divine ten per cent. off on regular price; but in many cases these favorable opinions do certainly

convey the idea of bribery and corruption. I give a letter below which has never been published, and which, though honestly written, was suppressed by the recipients through a mistaken notion of the eternal fitness of things.

TEASPOON LAKE, Me., July 10, 1884. Messrs. Annanias & Sapphira, Proprietors of Dr. Tapeworm's Night Blooming Liver Polish and Gall Cleanser, New York:

GENTLEMEN: Your favor of the 3d inst., inclosing P. O. money order for letter of endorsement for your celebrated Night Blooming Liver Polish and Gall cleanser, was duly received, but owing to the celebration of the nation's natal day, and a slight feeling of regret bordering on delirium tremens, I have not been able to prepare the letter of endorsement until now.

In 1879 I had a great deal of pain just northwest of the kidneys, I would say, and about due west of the spleen, as the crow flies. Doctors could do nothing for me, and life became to me a hollow mockery, utterly devoid of fun. My liver became swollen to the size of a bushel basket, I should judge, or larger, if you think best—use your own judgment about that—and my gall became abnormally large also. I suffered extremely from excruciating pains. Excruciating pains are always more or less painful, or at least they were in my case. I became so low and weak that my creditors despaired of my recovery. My large business as deputy clerk of School District No. 11 required my presence at my office every day, and yet the pain was so excruciating, as aforesaid, that I could hardly drag myself up the stairs, and when I returned I had to slide down the banisters.

I became cross and irritable in the extreme, frequently throwing my wife over the hen house while suffering from hypochondria. I never was unkind to my wife prior to this attack of enlarged gall, and my devotion to her was generally admitted by total strangers everywhere; but while low-spirited, as a result of my enlarged liver, I frequently drove her into the woods with a shotgun. I would then be overwhelmed with remorse and wish her back.

About three days ago I bought a bottle of your celebrated Night Blooming Liver Polish and Gall Cleanser. It saved my life. The first evening I took a teaspoonful of your remedy, and during the night coughed up one lobe of my liver, which was much inflamed and weighed nine pounds. From that moment I began to improve. I was soon able to attend to my arduous duties of deputy clerk of School District No. 11, to which I added these of alternate umpire in a scrub baseball game here. I now regard myself as fully recovered and have sent a mutual friend into the woods for my wife. I am greatly indebted to you, gentlemen, and would cheerfully be more so if convenient to you. You are at liberty to use this letter in any way you see fit, subject, of course, to your arrangements. If you should have any other remedies which you desire recommended, I would be glad to recommend them at living rates. Yours for health,

Martin Van Buren Brown. Deputy Clerk School District No. 11, and Alternate Umpire Baseball Nine, protem.

I have other specimen letters of endorsement, but space forbids their publication at this time.

## Bill Nye's Misfortune.

St. Paul Herald.

Our readers will be pained to learn that Bill Nye, the sparkling humorist, whose brilliant thoughts so often adorn the pages of the Herald, now lies at his home, in Hudson, Wisconsin, suffering the tortures of the damned, from a shattered leg. On Tuesday when the cyclone swept shrieking over a portion of Wisconsin, he was out with his brother, Frank Nye, in a light spring wagon, about three miles from Clear Lake. The cyclone caught them hurled them both violently to the ground, and as a result Bill's left leg was shattered below the knee. His brother left the injured humorist lying on the damp ground, in a soaking rain, and started through the fallen timber for help, and poor Bill lay there and suffered for two hours before a party of men could reach him and bear him away. As is well known, Mr. Nye has been in precarious health for a long time, and this second misfortune will tax his powers of endurance to the utmost.

And right here we desire to say that a cyclone that would slip up behind a sick man, who was too weak to defend himself, and use him thus is devoid of every principle of honor or manhood, and should be condemned. From all that can be learned Bill was riding peacefully along conversing with his brother on the modern plan of salvation, and gave the cyclone no provocation whatever to act as it did. Without a word of warning the sneak-

ing assassin came up behind him, yanked him from the wagon, mopped up a large space of woodland scenery with his helpless form, and then threw him down and jumped on him with both feet, and fled, howling like a fiend over its devilish work. The funnel-shaped outlaw is in the future no friend of ours. We are peaceably inclined and not given to revengeful feeling, but if that cyclone will call at this office during business hours we'll take it back to the bloody arena in our private alley and kick it so full of holes that it can't hold its pent up feelings. We'll twist it and tear it into such frightful shape that nature will not be able to properly reconstruct it without getting the original plans from the architect's office. We are no bully, but we can lick that cyclone with both feet tied behind our back!

Dozens of alleged "funny men" will issue extras in a mad race to see which shall be first to speak of the affair as an act of Providence. It's no such thing. It loves him, for he has done more to drive trouble and sorrow from the hearts and faces of its children than any humorous writer in America. His quaint, jolly, irresistible work goes into every home, and wherever it appears joy supplants sorrow and tears are hidden by healthful smiles. While his articles are being read grief is forgotten, and troublous cares fade from the memory. Of late years he has been a sufferer—oftentimes confined to his bed—yet he lay beneath the cloud, as the sun of heaven often lies beneath the clouds above, sending forth his gleams of sunshine through every rift.

Bill Nye's jolly writings are an index to his home life. Providence has blessed him with one of the happiest families on earth, a wife and two sweet little prattling girls—Bessie and Winnie, to whom he is devotedly attached. He is the sun around which they revolve, happy-faced satellites, and no gloom or clouds are ever seen in the Nye cottage when "papa" is at home. There is not a happier family circle in America.

The eyes of the whole reading world will be turned upon the hill at Hudson, and the heavens which surround the throne of grace, will be pierced by thousands of earnest prayers for the speedy recovery of one whose work it has ever been to scatter sunshine broadcast over the land. Tears of sympathy will blind the eyes that have been wont to sparkle with merriment over his incomparable wit, for the whole world loves him.

## POLITICAL BRIEVITIES.

The shutters of summer hotels and the pocketbooks of the departing guests now close with a hollow bang.—Phila. Call.

St. John should be very popular in some parts of Texas where it has not rained in four months.—Siftings.

The prohibitionists have a beautiful bungalow and are patiently waiting for some one to come and build a barrel around it.—Phila. Telegraph.

From the way the woman's rights women use cotton and other padding, there can be no question that they go in for reform. Stick a pin there.—Siftings.

It is stated that J. Randolph Tucker has returned a check for \$1,000 sent by a political admirer in Philadelphia to assist him in his canvass for Congress in the Tenth Virginia district.—Washington Star.

A young man asks if it is proper to dance with a lady when her husband is present? Certainly only to be particular to notice what part of the ball-room he is.—Brooklyn Times.

A Tennessee druggist recently gave a darkey two quarts of whiskey, under the supposition that he had been bitten by a rattlesnake. When he found he had only been stung by a wasp he promptly pumped him out and had him arrested for grand larceny.—Boston Globe.

"A kiss is a paroxysmal contract between the labial appendages attached to the superior and inferior maxillaries respectively of a man and woman or two women," says an exchange. Sho! We always supposed it was just a right smart smack.—Boston Star.

## A New Brand.

He had been at Coney Island all day and was struggling to get off his boots.

"I never (hic) go down to the Island," he said to his wife, "and look (hic) out over the broad expanse of sea, 'thout being (hic) filled with wonder."

"Filled with what?"

"Wonder."

"Wonder! That's a brand of whiskey I never heard of."—N. York Herald.

## Anti Pettibone Resolutions.

At an impromptu meeting of more than one hundred of the leading Republicans of Washington county, held in Jonesboro on Monday, Oct. 6, 1884. The following proceedings were had: On motion of Hon. Jas. A. West, R. M. K. Deakins was called to the chair. On motion of A. B. Bowman, Hon. J. A. West was elected secretary. The chairman stated the object of the meeting to be the organization of a Central Congressional Blaine and Logan and Anti-Pettibone club. On motion the Districts were called and all were represented but three. As the Districts were called, five minutes was allowed each for speeches. Nearly six of the Districts responded with enthusiastic Republican speeches, pledging their support to the National State and County tickets, and withdrawing their support from A. H. Pettibone. A. B. Bowman offered the following resolutions which were unanimously adopted:

WHEREAS the Republican party of this Congressional District is hopelessly divided in reference to the present Congressional race, and an honorable, equitable and satisfactory reconciliation has been made impossible by the blunders, arrogance and tyrannical usurpation of a certain class of leaders, and

WHEREAS we ardently desire a Republican victory in all the elections now pending, that do not involve the sacrifice of personal honor, and political integrity and independence; therefore, BE IT RESOLVED, that we pledge our support to both National and State tickets, and to further advance this interest, form ourselves into a club, to be known as the "Central Blaine & Logan and Anti-Pettibone Club."

BE IT RESOLVED, that we are consistent, steadfast and devoted Republicans, and will go as far as the farthest to secure the general success of the party, whenever and wherever duty dictates, honor leads and patriotism and fealty command.

BE IT RESOLVED, that we most heartily endorse the nomination of Hon. J. G. Blaine and Jno. A. Logan, for President and Vice President, of Judge Frank T. Reid for Governor, of Hon. Jno. Simerly for the State Senate, of Hon. R. R. Butler for Floater, and O. M. Brabson for county Representative, and that we hereby pledge our constant and unyielding efforts to secure their election.

BE IT RESOLVED, That in view of the fact that the leading and influential friends of Maj. A. H. Pettibone authorized so to do, made the solemn and voluntary promise at the Greenville Convention in 1882 that Mr. Pettibone would not be a candidate for re-election in 1884, and that Hon. A. A. Taylor should have a clear track; in view of the fact that this solemn and voluntary pledge became the understanding and will of the party, and that Mr. Pettibone frequently, in public and private, unreservedly approved and confirmed it; in view of the fact that, Mr. Pettibone, with these friends authorized by him to act in his behalf, willfully and arrogantly disregarded this solemn and voluntary pledge; in view of the fact that, in the late primary, high handed fraud and open bribery were used to nominate Mr. Pettibone and that he is now publicly and without provocation denouncing the adherents of Hon. A. A. Taylor in the most opprobrious and insulting terms, we will not condone his dishonoring non-performance of a sacred and unsought obligation, and the foul corrupting methods used to defeat the will and choice of the party and that we will now and in the future withdraw our confidence and support from Maj. A. H. Pettibone.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we deeply deplore the present condition of the Republican party in this District, and that the time has come when two ex-Democrats can vote one-third of the of the counties in the District, in the organization of the Executive Committee, and vote it too, in a manner contrary to all parliamentary law.

On motion, R. M. K. Deakins was elected President of the "Blaine and Logan and Anti-Pettibone Club" and R. M. May, J. A. West, H. B. Hanks and J. C. Campbell, Corresponding Secretaries.

On motion a committee of three in each district was appointed to organize similar clubs in their respective districts.

R. M. K. DEAKINS, President.

J. A. WEST, Secretary.

## Presence of Mind.

Hartoga Journal.

"And what of this present time?" cried the parson earnestly, snatching the pulpit. "What of this time in which we live? What about the now?"

"Now," said the good editor, suddenly arousing from his comfortable slumber, "now is the time to make up clubs."

And then the deacons clubbed together and set him out.